

EXTENSIONS OF REMARKS

FOCUSING ON WORKING FAMILIES

SPEECH OF

HON. BARBARA LEE

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, October 28, 2015

Ms. LEE. Mr. Speaker, thank you, Congresswoman BONNIE WATSON COLEMAN, for your tireless advocacy for working families. I'd also like to thank Ranking Member BOBBY SCOTT for leading the way, as ranking member of the Education and Workforce Committee, and with this important agenda.

Let me start by telling Andre's story.

Andre is from California, he's 31 and a father of four boys. He was a trained apprenticed carpenter.

When he began to look for work, he learned quickly that without a personal connection, it was nearly impossible to get a job in the construction industry. Every morning, he hustled to get to work sites by 5 AM to introduce himself to employers and show them his skills.

Seldom did he receive the opportunity to actually apply for a job.

As a result, he could barely sustain his family. Any income he had went to food, transportation and rent. So, he began volunteering with the Los Angeles Black Workers Center, which connected him to a good-paying job building new rail lines that let him provide for his family.

The unemployment and underemployment that Andre and other Black workers experience is not unique. The use of informal networks in hiring means that Black workers are often excluded and discriminated against before they even get a shot. Andre said: "Too many people are out there talking about training, like we're not trained enough. Training is not the issue. I was trained really well. The issue is access."

Andre is right—all the training in the world won't help if in the end, employers won't give people like Andre a fair shot.

And this agenda is designed to give Andre, his family and all families, a fair chance.

Andre's struggle reflects the divide in our economy and our country: while some have recovered fully from the Great Recession, too many working families are still struggling.

And in communities of color, which were the hardest hit by the Great Recession, unemployment and underemployment remains sky-high—and wage discrimination and formal and informal barriers to employment continue to slow economic growth.

For example, African American women in my home state of California still earn just 64 cents for every dollar paid to white men. And Latinas earn a mere 44 cents. This persistent wage gap is a reflection of our economy, which is leaving too many working families behind—especially communities of color.

That's why the Working Family Agenda is so important.

It takes long overdue steps to level the playing field for all.

Specifically, this agenda would: raise the wage for millions, strengthen collective bargaining and improve working conditions, provide paid sick and family leave, and expand access to childcare.

Furthermore, it would provide long overdue protections for women and LGBT Americans in the workplace.

And as a former small business owner, I know the importance and value of providing your employees with a living wage: it's better for your company and for retaining good workers.

Mr. Speaker, now is the time to take action on this agenda—families need it and our economy needs it. Let's boost wages, make it easier for families to balance work and family life, and bring an end to workplace discrimination.

That's what American families want—and it's what Congress should be working on.

RECOGNIZING JERRY DAVIS AS THE NORTHWEST FLORIDA AGRICULTURAL INNOVATOR OF THE YEAR

HON. JEFF MILLER

OF FLORIDA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, October 29, 2015

Mr. MILLER of Florida. Mr. Speaker, it is with great pleasure that I rise to recognize Mr. Jerry Davis from Florida's First Congressional District, for being selected as the Northwest Florida Agricultural Innovator of the Year.

Jerry's love of farming derives from his childhood, when he helped grow soybeans and wheat on his family's farm. Since the beginning, Jerry has been an innovator in the agricultural arena. By the time he was 20, he designed a seed conditioning plant to clean and bag seed for planting. In 1987, he became involved in the testing of a crop simulation model developed by scientists in USDA's Agricultural Research Services and Mississippi State and Clemson Universities. The model allowed participants to optimize inputs in relation to weather, nitrogen, moisture stress, crop maturity, growth resultants, and harvest aid materials. As a result of this innovative project, Jerry and the other participating growers saw net profits on test fields increase by more than \$30 per acre.

In the late 1990s, Jerry began expanding his farming operation from Santa Rosa County to Escambia County in Florida and Baldwin and Hale counties in Alabama. At the time, he was the only peanut grower in Hale and one of the first in Baldwin. Similarly, he was one of the first farmers to grow 30-inch twin row peanuts and use grid sampling and precision agriculture to perfect his technique over thousands of acres.

Most recently, Jerry has partnered with the University of Florida, Institute of Food and Agricultural Sciences to grow carinata, a plant that has the potential to help meet the renew-

able energy demands of the United States. Along with Northwest Florida scientists, Jerry is testing the viability of carinata in Northwest Florida and its potential use as a source of renewable jet fuel.

The Davis family farming tradition continues today as his wife Patty and daughter Caitlynn are also active on the farm, which comprises cotton, peanuts, wheat, corn, soybeans, vegetables, livestock, and other crops.

Aside from his agricultural contributions, Jerry is known throughout his community for his kind nature and willingness to help others. Jerry has participated in 12 mission trips to Central and South America, spreading his faith and helping those in need, and every Thanksgiving, he and his family donate sweet potatoes that are included in a box of Thanksgiving food that is provided to members of the Escambia and Santa Rosa counties in need.

Despite his busy schedule, Jerry is always happy to promote Northwest Florida agriculture and also has a very extensive civic resume including serving as District 1 Florida Farm Bureau Director since 2009, Santa Rosa County Farm Bureau President, Chairman of the Agricultural Research Committee for Cotton Incorporated, a member of the Florida Commissioner of Agriculture Peanut Advisory Committee, a member of the Southern Cotton Growers Farm Bill Task Force, and a director of the Florida and Southeastern Boll Weevil Eradication Foundation, Inc. Board.

Mr. Speaker, Northwest Florida and our Nation share a proud agricultural tradition built by the hard work of farmers and their families. The Northwest Florida Agricultural Innovator of the Year Award is a reflection of Jerry's tireless work and dedication to improving farming practices. On behalf of the United States Congress, I would like to offer my congratulations to Jerry Davis for being outstanding in his field. My wife Vicki and I extend our best wishes to him and the Davis family for their continued success.

RECOGNIZING GUITARS FOR HEROES

HON. KENNY MARCHANT

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, October 29, 2015

Mr. MARCHANT. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize a special veterans program in North Texas known as Guitars For Heroes. As an initiative through the Recreation Therapy Services of the VA North Texas Health Care System, the program was founded in 2012 by Fort Worth VA Outpatient Clinic Supervisor Donna Gerron with the objective of assisting veterans through music therapy.

Guitars For Heroes provides veterans 12 sessions of free instruction, acoustic guitars, and accessory kits with the intent of restoring joy and a renewed purpose in life. Veterans from all different backgrounds who are overcoming traumatic experiences, depression, or

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isolation have found solidarity and restoration through the program.

For over three years, Guitars For Heroes has mentored veterans into becoming fine musicians. I am pleased to announce that they will be performing at the Annual Veterans Fair on November 7, 2015, in Grapevine, Texas. This annual event, made possible by the tireless work of dedicated personnel, helps introduce veterans to important benefits, programs, and services. It will be a privilege to have Guitars For Heroes perform in front of the hundreds of attending veterans.

As a special acknowledgment, I am pleased to recognize each member of Guitars For Heroes performing at the fair. These honorable veterans are Mike Andersen, James Benson, Steve Brenner, James Bullard, Rondal Burns, Keith Burrowes, Marco Garcia, Djuan Jackson, Brian Michel, Frank Precure, Juan Reyes, Alfred Schram, Roy Vaughn, Glen Wilson, and Bill Yohn.

Mr. Speaker, it is a pleasure to acknowledge the success of Guitars For Heroes, and I ask all of my distinguished colleagues to join me in recognizing this special program.

RECOGNIZING OCTOBER 29, 2015 AS DIRECT SELLING DAY

HON. MARC A. VEASEY

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, October 29, 2015

Mr. VEASEY. Mr. Speaker, I rise to recognize today, October 29, 2015, as Direct Selling Day.

For years, the direct selling industry has made a significant impact on both families and the economy in Texas and across the nation.

Today, more than 18 million Americans, hailing from every state, Congressional district and community in the United States, are involved in direct selling.

For many individuals, direct selling is one of the most flexible businesses there is, and in today's busy world having an opportunity to work at one's own pace and earn additional income is beneficial and convenient when individuals are trying to balance work with family and other priorities.

Out of the more than 18 million Americans involved in direct selling, more than two million reside in Texas. Many of the residents I represent in Dallas and Fort Worth chose direct selling to provide economic security for their families.

Their efforts contribute more than \$34 million to the U.S. economy, helping individuals build their businesses while supporting their local and national economies.

As the economy continues to change and place more emphasis on flexibility, the direct selling industry will continue to grow and prosper.

It is clear that the direct selling companies across Texas and around the country are committed to helping the next generation of American entrepreneurs. Since its founding in September 2015, the Direct Sellers Caucus has worked to build greater awareness of direct selling and discuss policy issues relevant to the industry, ensuring that these companies can continue to make an impact on the lives of those involved.

In honor of the Direct Sellers Association's day on the Hill and the impact the industry has

on both local communities and the nation as a whole, this statement will be submitted.

IN RECOGNITION OF SERGEANT MAJOR ALAN M. GIBSON

HON. SANFORD D. BISHOP, JR.

OF GEORGIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, October 29, 2015

Mr. BISHOP of Georgia. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize and commend Sergeant Major Alan M. Gibson, the Division G3 Sergeant Major for the 4th Infantry and Fort Carson, Colorado, who will be retiring from the United States Army after 32 years of distinguished service to the United States of America. He will be honored at a retirement ceremony on Friday, October 30, 2015 at Fort Benning, Georgia.

A Georgia man through and through, Sergeant Major Alan Gibson is originally from Columbus, Georgia and graduated from Morris Brown College in Atlanta, where he earned a Bachelor of Science degree in Therapeutic Recreation/Kinesiology in 1982. He is currently working on a Master's degree from Central Michigan University. SGM Gibson joined the United States Army in October 1983 and completed basic training at Fort McClelland, Alabama and Advanced Individual Training at Fort Benning, Georgia. In his first assignment, he served as an Infantryman in the Berlin Brigade from March 1984 to October 1985.

After departing Berlin, Germany, SGM Gibson attended Airborne School and the Ranger Indoctrination Program (RIP) prior to being assigned to 3rd Battalion, 75th Ranger Regiment, at Fort Benning while he served as a Rifleman, Team Leader, and Squad Leader from October 1985 to April 1989. In fact, he would return to Fort Benning several times throughout his career. He also served in numerous leadership and staff positions at Fort Myer, Virginia; Yongsan, Korea; Fort Monroe, Virginia; and Fort Leavenworth, Kansas, where he was the Sergeant Major for the Center for Army Leadership for the Combined Arms Center (CAC).

SGM Gibson served four combat tours, including Operation Just Cause in Panama; Operation Iraqi Freedom 1 in Iraq; Operation Enduring Freedom (OEF 13-14) in Afghanistan; and he deployed in support of Operation Enduring Freedom in Kuwait.

SGM Gibson is a highly decorated non-commissioned Army officer. His numerous awards and decorations include the Bronze Star Medal with V devices, Bronze Star w/ 1OLC, Purple Heart, Meritorious Service Medal, Combat Infantryman Badge (2nd Award), Expert Infantryman Badge, Master Parachutist Badge with Bronze Star, Pathfinder Badge, Aviation Crewmember Badge, Canadian Parachutist Badge, German Schutzenschnur Badge (Silver), and the coveted Ranger Tab, among many others. SGM Gibson also was awarded the Order of Saint Maurice (Infantry), and Order of The Combat Spurs (Cavalry).

On a personal note, I am proud to call SGM Alan Gibson my friend. I have witnessed firsthand his compassionate leadership and his enduring dedication to our great nation. Throughout his distinguished career, SGM Gibson has consistently exhibited the Seven Core Army Values of Loyalty, Duty, Respect,

Selfless Service, Honor, Integrity, and Personal Courage.

SGM Gibson has certainly accomplished many things in his life but none of this would have been possible without the love and support of his wife, Cheryl, and their three daughters, Asia Rochelle, Alana Shantelle and Ariel Danae.

Mr. Speaker, today I ask my colleagues to join me and my wife, Vivian, in extending our sincerest gratitude and best wishes to Sergeant Major Alan Gibson and his family, on the occasion of his retirement from a stellar career of 32 years in the United States Army.

RECOGNIZING THE HENDRICKS FAMILY AS THE 2015 SANTA ROSA COUNTY, FLORIDA, OUT- STANDING FARM FAMILY OF THE YEAR

HON. JEFF MILLER

OF FLORIDA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, October 29, 2015

Mr. MILLER of Florida. Mr. Speaker, it is with great pleasure that I rise to recognize the Hendricks Family from Jay, Florida, for being selected as the 2015 Santa Rosa County, Florida, Outstanding Farm Family of the Year.

A fourth generation farmer, Rick Hendricks was only six years old when he first began to work on the farm alongside his father, B.D. By the age of 12, he had graduated to using a selective tractor, and as a teenager, he worked on the farm after school and athletic practices before going off to college at Livingston University. Rick played football at Livingston before his love of the farm brought him home.

During Rick's farming career, several changes have taken place in the agricultural industry, and he has witnessed and experienced the new picker/balers, as well as changes in cotton and peanut production equipment from two-row to six-row. Over the years, the Hendricks' family farm has grown and incorporated new technology, and today, in addition to his own farming operation, Rick manages Hendricks and Son Farms, Inc. and B.D. Hendricks Farm, which in total covers 2,250 acres and includes 200 brood cows and row crops of cotton, peanuts, and hay.

To Rick, his wife Nina of 27 years, and their children, Brandt, Rush, and Tessa, farming is an investment in their future. It is Rick's hope, that the value of hard work instilled in him by his parents, will also create the strong foundation for future success for his children. It is also truly a family affair, and today the Hendricks family farm is also operated by Rick's sister, Vicki; nephews, Tanner and Todd; as well as full time employee, Dylan Barnes.

In addition to the hours spent on the farm, Rick has served as a member and advisor of many organizations including terms as President of the Board for Santa Rosa County Farm Bureau and the Jay Peanut Farmers Cooperative.

Mr. Speaker, Northwest Florida and our Nation share a proud agricultural tradition built by the hard work of farmers and their families. The Santa Rosa County Outstanding Farm Family of the Year Award is a reflection of Rick and his family's tireless work and dedication. On behalf of the United States Congress,